

Int. Copy
A
MODEST PLEA

In BEHALF of the
People call'd *Quakers*.

IN
ANSWER

To a PAMPHLET, Intituled,
The Nature and Duty of Self-defence,
address'd to the People call'd QUAKERS.

To which are added,
Some Remarks on the *British Oracle*.

L O N D O N :

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Helen A. Parrish



A

Modest Plea, &c.



T is well known to *all* who have perused the Writings of our ancient *Friends*, the *People* called *Quakers*, that their *main* and *fundamental* Pillar, and Principle in Divinity, was, *the Light of Jesus Christ within*, or a Manifestation of the Holy Spirit, given to every Man to profit withal; and we believe, that *some* of the *first* and most *eminent* *Preachers* of this Doctrine, were raised up, and sent forth into the World to gather People from the various Ceremonies, Inventions, and Traditions of Men (under which true Religion lay buried and obscured) into the true Knowledge of this inward Principle of *Grace* and *Salvation* in themselves; and that our Principles were chiefly formed, or *rather revived*, by the Knowledge conveyed through this inward Principle, that the *Letter* of the *Bible* will

never be *well* and *truly* understood, but in a *due Subordination* to the *Spirit*, who gave it forth at first, and *is now* best able to settle and explain its Meaning.

It cannot be true therefore, that we have founded our Scruple against bearing Arms in our own Defence, merely on the literal Authority's of the Precepts of our Saviour : (a) The bearing this Testimony *arose chiefly*, as we think, from the Operation of a Principle *in* the Mind, which Men of the *greatest Understanding* (well aware of the Stratagems of Satan, and the Havock which *Enthusiasm* makes, where it gains a Superiority over the Mind) believed to be divine, and, as they acknowledged the *Bible* to be a Revelation proceeding from *this Spirit*, and to contain ample Testimonies to all the Essentials of Christianity; 'twas natural enough for them to quote the Precepts of *Christ*, and those Passages of Scripture (which favour their peaceable Principle) against the *Arguments* and *Clamours* of their Adversaries : And really, some wise and great Men of other Societies, have been convinced that we have lost no Ground against our Adversaries in *this very Argument*, and the Author of *Self-defence*, if we may judge from a Passage in the latter Part of his Book, seems to allow
some-

(a) Self-defence, Page 2.

something like his having misrepresented the Quakers; his Words are, " the People called " Quakers, I am well persuaded, would never have interpreted the Scriptures against " Self-defence as they have done, had not " they esteemed themselves led to Peace and " Non-resistance, by the Operation of an " Internal Principle, &c. (b)

His first Argument (c) to set aside a famous Prophecy (*They shall beat their Swords into Plow-shares, and their Spears into Pruning-books. Nation shall not lift up Sword against Nation, neither shall they learn War any more;*) is only advanced on a mere Supposition, that, *there are now among those who hold defensive fighting to be lawful; many Persons of meek and quiet Spirits, who would not draw the Sword offensively, or injure their Neighbours in their Persons and Properties on any Account.*

Now, tho' I am willing to make to honest Men, all possible and candid Allowances, yet I think this Method of arguing is rather too presumptive and inconclusive, and borders a little too much upon what our Casuists call *begging the Question*; for it appears there is something so very *circumstantial* and particular

(b) Page 54.

(c) Page 3.

ar in *this* Prediction, as *will* be difficult to reconcile to our *Author's Account* of the Matter; the Prophecy says, such a *glorious* and *peaceable State* of the Nations shall obtain in the World, that *War* shall *not only* be laid aside, but the *very Art* and Study of it *discontinued*, and the Instruments used therein be converted to *other Purposes*: Will our Author admit this to be consistent on his *Principles*, with that *Precaution* and *Care* which it is necessary for Men endowed with *human Reason* to take, in standing *always* in due Preparation against any *new Attack*, that may be made upon their *Persons* and *Properties*? But that this intire, happy, and peaceable State of the Nations, is *not* so likely to succeed in the World on any Principles *but those* of the *Quakers*, will I hope appear anon in the Course of the Argument, more fully than the *British Oracle*, or the Admirers of our Author's Performance seem *at present* to imagine.

Having, as *he thinks*, fully explained the Text to his own Side; we are next entertained with a *long* and *labour'd Comment* on the Precepts of our Lord, in order to prove, that *other Things* (which yet we allow to have *due* and *necessary Exceptions*) are in Words as *positively forbid*, as fighting itself; which, *who denies*, or who is there *among us*, that will contend, that *all Manner* of *Self-defence*

fence is hereby designedly excluded and abolish'd by our Saviour? We think, that Magistracy and domestick Rule over Children and Servants, may well consist, with a perfect Obedience of the Precept, resist not Evil. But, we think also that in some Instances were we are deeply aggrieved, the relying on Providence for Succour and Support, will best become us, as the Disciples of Jesus; and instead of injuring or detrimmenting our Persons, be upon the whole greatly conducive to our Happiness and Benefit.

We do not affirm the Precept to be entirely unlimited, or that Deity must do every thing, and we nothing for ourselves. Means we allow to be necessary to the Attainment of many good Ends; but who, the British Oracle, and perhaps some others excepted, is there, that doth not perceive a visible Difference, between the cool and innocent Means of industry to provide a reputable Subsistence in Life, and a Discharge of Cannon and small Arms amongst, and bathing our Swords in the Blood of a mixt Multitude, of innocent and guilty Persons assembled together at the mere arbitrary Devotion and Ambition, perhaps of a Tyrant?

I mention this to shew, that our Author's Arguments to prove the Necessity of fighting

ing in Behalf of our *civil Constitution*, have not in them altogether so much Weight, as he and some others seem to imagine; and that is our Opinion, *better Arguments* for the *Administration of Justice* in a legal Way, may be easily produced than *can be* alledged for such fighting as above, openly in the Field; and is not the *Reason evident*, that this Administration of Justice in a *civil Way*, is in itself *vastly preferable* to such military Havock and Destruction as generally accompanies the Sword? And as we are now on *the Point*, were *all Hinges*, and our Author, *is strongest*, if we can but *fairly account* for our Doctrine here, all the rest of his Book will, I am persuaded, be of little or *no Amount* against us. But give me leave, first, to premise a few Things *concerning Government*, which are I believe *strictly consistent* with our Friend's Principles.

First then, that *our Arguments* are urged *only* in Behalf of those who are brought in themselves to the Knowledge of this *inward* and *peaceable Principle*; and in refusing to fight with *carnal Weapons*, have surrendered cheerfully *their All* into the Hands and Protection of the *Almighty*. The Magistrate, or *any other Person*, *not convinced* of this, to be their Duty, may *very fitly* fight in Defence of *Life, Liberty, and Property*; and it is *even possible*,

possible, if not probable, that the outward Sword *thus drawn* in a good Cause has been secretly blessed and prospered by the Almighty, and that such an Army formed on these Principles may have *often been* a Bulwark and Security to those whose tender Consciences would not permit them to draw the carnal Sword themselves ; and as I am a true Lover of the *British Constitution* and Government, I am glad to see *publick Writers* extol with Affection, *our King* and Constitution, the *Prince of Wales*, and *our Royal Hero the Duke*. Yet methinks, if we believe in a Providence, which superintends all human Affairs and Events, a little more Regard to *this Providence* as giving the Victory, would in *our Author* have had a little stronger Appearance of the Humility and Piety of the good Christian, than I am sorry to say it does now so fully abound in his Book, as we might have Reason from a *Christian Writer* to expect.

I now proceed to shew the great Difference between the Administration of Justice in a civil Way, and fighting openly in the Field of Battle. Civil Justice, in the first Place (supposing it to be rightly administred) punishes only the Guilty, it very often remits the first and second Offence, the Offender is admonished of his Crime, and sometimes becomes a better Man ; and were our Laws

B

formed

formed upon the ancient Plan of the Almighty, putting to Death would perhaps be more rare than at present, and Ways *might be devised* to bring Men to *Repentance* and *Amendment* by certain *corporal Punishments*, or by *bodily Labour*, suited to mend the *Sufferer*, and deter the *Spectator*. Again, when *Punishment*, even unto Death, as in the *Case of shedding Blood*, be requisite as an Act of Justice for the Punishment of that *heinous Sin*, and the *good of the Community*; a Man, if under an *unjust Suspicion* of the Crime, has *all fair and possible Opportunity* allowed to *justify himself*, and even should he be *Guilty*, yet, unless there is *clear Proof* against him, the Law will acquit him, should he be *found Guilty*, yet, here is *Time allowed* him to repent of his Sins and become *humble and contrite Penitent*; and *beseeching*, in *how pathetick* and moving Manner have some such *poor Criminals* quitted the Stage of Life, and what good has not been *sometimes effected* by their earnest *dying penitent Exhortations*, among *some* of their old Friends and *Associates* in Iniquity; it must certainly be *much more* desirable to a Man who *thinks seriously*, to end his Life (tho' it be for Crimes that deserve it at the Hand of Justice) in *this Manner*, than to be destroyed in a Moment. The late Earl of Kilmarnock made a very singular and penitent Exit, and it was
Matter

Matter of no small Joy to that *Nobleman*, not to *have fell* in the midst of his Sins in the *dreadful Carnage* of *Culloden*; and he thought it an unspeakable Mercy to have so good an Opportunity as his Imprisonment afforded him to become duly sensible of his Sins, and in a good Measure reconciled to his Creator, thro' Jesus Christ our Lord.

Let us now Survey the *other Side*, two Armies fighting in the Field; and let us examine if it be probable, that a *perfect tender-hearted Christian*, who has learned of his Lord to pity and pray for, and forgive Enemies, can *under any Circumstance* whatever, *shed the Blood of the Innocent*; to me it appears plain (and pray observe the Dispute, is only concerning such Men as these) that a *truly, humble, meek, and contrite Person*, can have *no great Stomack* to cut Throats, and that he would sooner endure *twenty Deaths*, were it possible, himself, than take away *one innocent Life*; alas! of what *mighty Avail* or Benefit is the Continuance of Life to a Man who is not only in continual Readiness to die, but *groans earnestly to put off this mortal Cloathing*, and exchange a fluctuating State of *Trial and Sorrow* for a *never fading Crown* of Bliss and Beatitude, where his Sorrows shall cease and his Wishes be satisfied, *is it possible* that such a Man as

this can lift up his Hand against the Innocent, and how much more impossible is it, he should destroy by Thousands *poor Souls* forced into such Wars, and in the *midst of their Sins* and Impurities delivered up to *that awful Judgment Seat*, where the Sinner cannot hide himself; and, how many sorrowful Widows and fatherless Babes must a good Man *thus waging War*, be forced to make; besides, are not the Cruelties, Ravages, and Abuses of War, *innumerable and intolerable to bear*, and do they not generally fall upon those who are *most*, if not entirely innocent of the Provocation. View the Matter seriously in all *these Lights*, and tell me if any thing in Life can to a good Man weigh against BUT ONE, and much less ALL of these Considerations.

Instead of pursuing such *bloody Measures* then, would it not be *more Christian*, as well as more safe, when Matters get to this *wild and lawless Crisis*, as obliges the Innocent to murder each other, for a *good Man to depend entirely upon Providence*, surely, if this Dependance be ever *at all* rational, it must be in *such Cases* as these, where rather than be instrumental to bring such *great Evils* on the *Souls and Bodies* of Men, we humbly and patiently acquiesce in the *divine Will*, and yeild up all to his *most wise and fatherly*

fatherly Disposal: Some of our pious renowned Forefathers, have stood *fearless* with *Knives* at their *Throats* and *Daggers* at their *Breasts*, and where there has been an entire *humble* Faith and Dependance on divine Providence, they have often found a Testimony, speaking *their Innocence* and *pleading their Cause* in the Hearts of their Adversaries, and the unspeakable Charms of a meek and quiet Spirit, under Suffering, has melted many a *hard Heart* into *Love* and *Contrition*, it is a *noble Employ* to mend Mankind after this Manner, and Christians, had they *kept here*, true Religion, I doubt not, would have prospered more abundantly in the Earth.

The *Providence of God* is variously manifested, sometimes in *delivering out of*, sometimes in *supporting under* Difficulties, Straits, and Afflictions, and *sometimes* in the Course of his Providence, he amply repays all our *Pains and Troubles* by a *Shine of worldly Blessings*, as he did in this Life to his *Servant Job*; but setting all this aside, there is a *Recompence of Reward* in the Life to come, on which holy Men depend, that will abundantly compensate all their Afflictions, Losses, and Self-denial here.

The more Men depend on their Creator for their *own Preservation*, rather than *do the least*

least Evil, the more will divine Providence be exerted in their Favour, and a *powerful Testimony* be raised in the Hearts of others in Favour of the Innocent; it will be in vain to *talk and preach* about *loving and forgiving* our Enemies, unless we shew the World by *uniform Practice* in what *high Estimation* we hold the Laws of Christ and his *holy Example*: Remember, the *primitive Christians* thought themselves bound to comply literally with the Precepts of *loving and forgiving Enemies*, to that Degree, that it is recorded in *ancient History*, that when their most bitter and severe Persecutors, have been *sick and afflicted*, they have *tended upon*, and *wept around* them with all the *Cordialty* and *Affection* of *Brethren*, and have rejoiced in all Opportunities of serving and assisting them, and he who to a *righteous Life* and a *meek Spirit* annexes (rather than do the *least Evil*) a firm Reliance on Providence will *never be mistaken* in the End, but find a full and gracious repay. Men may indeed devise *very innocent* Means for their own Safety, but this is nothing to what Providence is able to do for his *People*. *Jacob* after a long Absence from his Brother, and great fear of falling by the *Hand of Revenge*, very *wisely prepares* a Present to appease his angry Brother. But it looks to me as if the *Lord his God*, whose Providence had all along awaited

awaited his Servant *Jacob*, had been *before-hand with Esau*, and softened his hard and rugged Spirit, *that sought Revenge*, into a quite contrary Temper, of *Compassion and Brotherly Love*.

Remember that *all Things* are intirely subservient to God's Will, the *Winds and Waves* became *silent* at a Word speaking, and even under the Dispensation of Ceremonies, when fighting was allowed, yet many good and holy Men relied on that Providence for which we contend: When the Servant of *Elisba* was in *great Fear and Terror*, because of the imminent Danger to which he thought *himself* and his *Master exposed*; because of the great Host of *Assyrians* encamped so near them: The Prophet who better understood the Matter, and knew his own Safety, *prayed to the Lord* to open the young Man's Eyes, which being graciously complied with, he *soon saw enough to quiet all his Fears*, viz. the Mountain *surrounded with, and full of Chariots and Horsemen of Fire*, one of whom perhaps it might be that made such terrible Slaughter in one Night, in a very numerous and formidable Army of *Assyrians*; destroying no less than one Hundred and eighty-five Thousand Men. And there is one *Thing remarkable* in respect to our Testimony against fighting; that as *we all* of this
Society

Society profess to be led and guided by the *Divine Spirit*, it may perhaps be hard to find a *single Person* who can truly aver a Licence to fight was ever in his own Mind, reconcilable with a strict and *devout Adherence* to *this inward Monitor*: And I intreat our *younger Brethren* to consider, that several of our former Friends *were*, without consulting each other, brought in *this Respect* into a *perfect* Uniformity of Sentiment; the Case of *Tbo. Lurting* is one ever memorable Instance of it; it is also worthy our *serious Remembrance*, by what an *innocent Stratagem*, he retook a Ship from the *Turks*, and repossessed the Master with the Command, and with what *Humanity* he set all his Prisoners safe ashore in their own Country.

Be pleased also to reflect, that the *Clergy* of this Nation have *ever* in their *Sermons* told the People, that it is *Sin* which brings Destruction upon them, and *no Endeavours* of their own, without Repentance and Amendment, and turning from the Evil of our Ways, can be safely relied on in a *Time of common Danger*; is not this removing the *greatest Part* of our Dependance from the Arm of *Flesh*, and placing it *chiefly* upon God.

If

If Righteousness then be the *best Armour* against all Dangers, *if the Prayer of a righteous Man avails much*, and the best and meekest Minds, tho' they cannot weild the *outward Sword*, are clad with this *better Armour*, and can *weild it skilfully* and successfully on Behalf of their Country; who among us *contribute more* than these to its *true Welfare*, if the most undissembled *Piety*, *Prayers*, and *Tears* are available in the Sight of Heaven? In *this Way* has this Nation by some who cannot draw the *outward Sword* been *served Day and Night*; and as our Author has *very civilly* allowed the *Quakers* to be a serviceable set of Men, of very great Utility to the *Publick Good*; that the Government, who protects their *tender Consciences*, are *worthy* the continual Care and *Protection* of Heaven; that the *Quakers themselves*, refusing to fight, cannot on the whole be less happy than those who in *this Respect* act according to the *Laws of Nature* and *Nations*: All this he has allowed; and if *such as these* who do not fight benefit the Nation as much another Way; if the Nation by *protecting tender Consciences*, enhances the divine Favour and Regard. In short, if *neither the Government* on one hand, nor the *Quakers* on the other, receives the least Injury by *our Doctrine*, one would

wonder what could be our Author's Motive for writing this *excellent Book*.

He seems indeed somewhat sensible of the Pinch to which our Reasons must naturally reduce him; and solves it thus, "as in the
" Dispensations of divine Corrections, such
" as Famine and Pestilence, &c. The Innocent and Guilty suffer in this World together, so has War very often the same promiscuous Effect. (*d*)

In this he must give us leave to differ *widely from him*; the Argument is rather too *presumptive* and *soaring* to be admitted, because it sets the *Creature* on a *Level* of *Prerogative* with *his Maker*; if God comes down in his *Wrath* to visit the *World* for their Iniquities, a *Famine* or *Pestilence* may be a *double Dispensation* of *Indignation* and *Mercy*, the *Righteous* may be taken from the *Evil* to come and placed beyond Danger, while those whose *Iniquities* are full, may justly deserve his Displeasure; but by what Arguments shall this Right and Conduct in God be brought in or applied in Justification of shedding Blood promiscuously under the forementioned Circumstances, according to the arbitrary Pleasure of weak and *aspiring Mortals*.

There

There are *several other Texts* of Scripture, into the Meaning of *which* I might easily enter *with this Author*, but as these neither *do*, nor *can* serve his Purpose without *much Art* and *straining*, in *Opposition* to other *more weighty* and *solid Arguments*, *nothing material* or considerable is to be reaped from them; there is however one Thing not to be *passed over*; he has taken *much Pains* to procure a Reception of the Doctrines he teaches, by a *very plausible* and artful Representation of the *Nature* and *Contemptibleness* of the Prejudice of Education, this *tho' true*, in a *great Degree*, may its to be feared, have a *pernicious Tendency* on some young and inexperienced Minds, whose Passions for *more Liberty* may be *strong*, and who may not only take their Flight from *this*, but be led to *deviate from other Parts* of our Doctrine; and this too before they are *duly capable* duly to *try* and *examine* their Truth and Dignity. I therefore *earnestly beseech* my young Friends to consider, that unless *something extraordinary* had appeared to their *wise* and *pious Forefathers*, in *this*, and in *several other Branches* of our *Testimony*, they would never have been *so strict*, or have sacrificed *so much* as they have done on *these Accounts*: Let this then be *at least* a Reason for making a *decent Pause* before we quit any of those

Things, wherein we stand *so eminently distinguished* from the rest of the World ; and *above all*, let him who *believes* in that *inward Principle*, upon which as a People we *first set out* in the World, be careful in all his *religious Enquiries*, to *follow strictly* the *Leadings* of this, and whatever in his *Education* this informs him to be *wrong*, let him *zealously discard*; but he cannot be *too fearful* and *cautious*, lest a *worldly, sensual, and libertine Spirit* draw him into a *Disobedience* and *Contempt of the Law writ in the Heart*. The World is full of *lying Vanities*, adapted to *seduce* and *cheat* the Soul, yet Religion rightly experienced, has *Joys*, which could all the *Pleasures of Sense and Speculation* be resolved into, one *intire Sensation*, would *intirely transcend* and *outweigh them all*; I wish our Society was as *glorious an Ornament* to Christianity as formerly ; I am afraid there are indeed too many as this Writer hints, who fall as much short in *Acts of Humanity, Charity, and Benevolence*, as he seems to think, *they superabound in the other of not resisting Evil*: It is a very evil Thing to oppress the Poor, whom God has commanded us to feed, and it may be worth our while to consider, how we shall be able to answer hereafter such a dreadful Violation of Trust and Humanity, or be able to abide the Ter-

ror and Vengeance of that Day, when the great Judge of all the Earth shall bring forth the Widow and Fatherless to confront us.

I think enough has been said for the Present, when *this Writer* has given me Satisfaction upon *the main Point*, I promise to take a further Notice of his Book.



REMARKS

R E M A R K S

Upon the following

QUESTION and ANSWER;

Taken from Number II. Page 77. of the
BRITISH ORACLE.

Quest. 32. *D*O the Doctrines of Christ allow of necessary fighting and just Wars? A. "The Author
" of the Nature and Duty of Self-defence,
" addressed to the People called Quakers, has,
" in the handsomest Manner invincibly proved the indispensable Necessity of it, and
" that the mortal Precepts of Jesus, which
" seem to militate against it, must of Necessity allow of reasonable Exceptions, in
" that as well as in other Cases. This
" Book is so excellently well wrote, it is
" highly necessary for the Quakers to Answer it, by overthrowing the Arguments
" therein, least they be thought to be rather Cowards than Christians; and if
" they cannot, it will appear, that a Religion,

“ *gion*, tho’ believed to be founded by the
 “ Holy Ghost, may want Amendment ;
 “ from whence it will follow, that *all In-*
 “ *spiration*, is but fallible Conception, and
 “ that the Wisdom of Reason is superior to
 “ any other that is preferred to it ; and yet as
 “ much as this Piece is admired by us, this
 “ Oracle is open to receive any Arguments,
 “ which can be produced against that, or
 “ any thing contained herein.”

As we think our Oracle has had the Mis-
 fortune to be both *blind* and *lame*, to have
 been *dumb likewise*, might have been more
 to its Credit. Such *Mistakes*, and *Mistakes*
too, that tend to *Severity*, upon a pious and
reputable Body of Christians, is not *strictly*
reconcilable with good *Manners*, and *much*
less with *Christianity*. The Question seems
 to be of the *same wise Sortment* as the An-
 swer, if fighting be *just* and *necessary*, who
 will deny it ? But it being a *controverted*
Point, whether *Defensive fighting* can be
 agreeable to the Meekness and Humility of
 a Disciple of Jesus ; those *Epithets* of *just*
 and *necessary* ought I think to have been *left*
out of the Question.

However, after *applauding* the *Book*, we
 are presented with *two Inferences*, first, *That*
 if

if the Quakers cannot Answer it, it will appear, that a Religion, tho' believed to be founded by the Holy Ghost, may want Amendment, a common Man, much more an Oracle might tell us, that whether the Quakers can, or cannot Answer this Book, that it will be equally sure and certain, that a Religion only believed to be founded by the Holy Ghost may want Amendment; for from Experience it is Evident to all, that the filiest Errors and vilest impostures have been fathered upon, and by many believed to proceed from the Holy Ghost. Mahomet pretended to high Converse, &c. and his Followers believed it.

Again, suppose the Quakers may not be able to demonstrate clearly by Argument the Truth of their Testimony against Fighting, *will its absolute Falshood thence follow, or, would an Oracle make such a strange Inference: He perhaps, who admits of divine Revelation, will be apt to alledge, that if Inspiration in the Mind be known to be what it really is, and that it comes from God, the Authority of the Revealer (tho' God may not at the first, please to connect the Reason of the Revelation when he makes it, or we be able fully to apprehend and perceive its Use) is abundantly a sufficient Ground for*
our

our complying therewith ; but there are, as we have seen some Reasons to be given for *this Testimony* ; and I believe the Oracle will find himself here at Variance with his *admired Book*, for that *advises our Friends to rest the whole Weight of their Testimony upon supernatural Light, and the Authority which God has to require more of some Persons, than the stated Laws of the Dispensation under which they live hath required of them, (e)* And it tells us also, that neither *human Reason* nor *Scripture* can, if it be rested here, be able to detect it, it follows then, according to this Concession that *their Testimony* may be right, and yet, not proveable to Reason, by Argument.

The Oracle's next Inference is, yet more extraordinary, viz. it follows also, that all *Inspiration* is but fallible Conception, and that the *Wisdom of Reason* is superior to any other. According to this oracular wise Way of drawing Inferences, every Truth and Demonstration in the World may be easily destroyed, the sublime and most finished Arts and Sciences have had their vain Pretenders, whom some have believed to be good Judges, is the Art therefore in itself invaild or uncertain ?

E

That

That *there should in Inspiration be nothing beyond fallible Conception* ; because, a System of Doctrines believed to proceed from the Holy Ghost *may want mending*, is I confess a very new Discovery, and I suspect, the Oracle has been a *little fallible* and mistaken in his Answer ; and what he *would* or *should* have said, I *presume was*, that a Religion really communicated to them, under the Inspiration of the Holy Ghost, must, if it wants mending, infer a Fallibility in the Conception of the Persons who impart it to the World. Now, taking it in *this Light*, it does by no Means appear to me, that, because in *some special Cases*, where Men have long been wedded to Ceremony and Superstition, the Judgment being corrupt, has misled the Understanding, tho' sometimes inspired ; that therefore, Inspiration is not in many Instances (was so to the Apostles) too strong and clear to be easily, or perhaps possibly mistaken, or, that it carries not with it, to the Mind, an Evidence and Brightness superior to Reason ; and is given to Man, not to blind and mislead him, but exalt his Ideas and Apprehensions into a State of greater Knowledge and Perfection ; these Truths may be easily proved and illustrated from the Bible, whenever the Oracle is pleased to demand it. In the mean Time, to make fair
and

and *genuine* Representations of Things, to be *decent* and *candid* in its Language; (a) and above all, after the noble Example of the great *Newton*, *Lock*, and *Addison*, to treat the important Doctrine of a divine Revelation, with a becoming *Humility*, *Modesty*, and *Deference*, will, I hope *always* be expected from a *British Oracle*.

(a) Page 77. Cowards rather than Chrstians.

F I N I S.



(17)
and genuine Representations of Things, to
be decent and exactly in its Language; (a)
and above all, after the noble Example of the
great Master, Lord, and Liberator, to treat
the important Doctrine of a divine Revela-
tion, with a becoming Humility, Modesty,
and Reserve; will, I hope, always be ex-
pected from a Bishop's Oration.

(a) Bishop Coward's oration on the same

THE END